

Panel Response
Wolf Creek Dam Condition and 680 Operation Restrictions
4-26-07

Question to be addressed by the Panel: What is the Panel's position on the pool restriction at elevation 680?

Panel Response:

The Panel finds that the current pool restriction elevation of 680 for Wolf Creek Dam is satisfactory for now. This finding is based on actions taken by the Corps which includes: 1) acceleration the grouting program, 2) expansion of the surveillance of the dam, and 3) increasing the investigation and instrumentation programs. These actions mitigate the short term risks associated with the higher storage restriction of 680.

This finding is not contradictory to the Panel's consensus report which states: "a target drawdown level of between 640 and 650 is needed to help avoid the development of a failure due to seepage through the embankment dam and its foundation. The Panel recognizes that there are many important considerations related to establishing a target reservoir restriction level including 1) potential impacts of dam failure at the drawdown reservoir restriction level, and 2) the loss of flood control, hydropower, water supply, and recreation benefits."

The report further states that "if the Corps determines that a target drawdown level of 640 to 650 is not practical, and that a higher target storage level of about 680 is appropriate, the Panel recommends that the foundation grouting program be completed by May 30, 2007 under Monolith 37, under the embankment in the area immediately adjacent to Monolith 37, and in the area to the right of the point where the existing diaphragm wall was terminated."

Finally, the Panel recommended, with respect to level of drawdown, that "Once completed, the results of the supplemental investigation and grouting program, along with the supplemental instrumentation monitoring, should be independently reviewed to determine whether adjustments to the target reservoir drawdown" (up or down) "are appropriate."